

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 25 Issue 28 2017-07-21

### **Mi CASA es su CASA**

A Look at the Canadian Alliance  
of Student Associations

### **Travelling with Textbook**

A “Working” Holiday

### **The Fires Burn On**

Another Look at the BC blaze.

*Plus:  
Review: The Sylvia Platters  
Miracle Makers  
and much more!*



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***The Voice  
Magazine***

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*The Voice* is published  
every Friday in HTML and  
PDF format.

For weekly email  
reminders as each issue is  
posted, fill out the  
subscription form [here](#).

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



**We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.**

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**EDITORIAL****Karl Low****An Issue of Obligation**

The big issue lately has been the federal government's decision to settle its case with Omar Khadr for what is rumored to be about ten million dollars. There's been a lot of reaction to this, with most Canadians thinking it's wrong that we reward a person who was an admitted terrorist for the other side during the conflict in Afghanistan.

I'm in the minority on this issue. No, I don't like that we've given Khadr such a large sum of money, but it has to be remembered that this award has almost nothing to do with Omar Khadr himself. It instead has to do with the actions of successive Canadian governments, from Liberal Chretien and Martin, through Conservative Harper, when our government refused to abide by our Charter of Rights because it was politically inconvenient to do so. That kind of activity demands punishment, and that's exactly what this settlement is. Of course, the nature of politics is that the government that's going to have that punishment taken out on them is one that didn't make any of the decisions that lead to this payout being necessary in the first place. If there's one bright side that can come from this, perhaps the level of attention will cause any future Canadian government to shy away from avoiding its obligations again.

But closer to home, AUSU is nine council members, four staff (including yours truly) and you, some 25,000 members spread across the country and world. While AUSU did, and I still think does, manage to punch above its weight-class while advocating for student issues, that kind of dispersed population means it's difficult to get the attention of politicians, because we're simply spread too thin to really be able to threaten any particular politician's position. (Say that three times fast.)

Enter the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, or CASA as it's more commonly known. They're a group of various student unions that often has a focus on lobbying the federal government directly, becoming a magnifying glass for student issues that can put some heat underneath a politician. AUSU has looked at membership in CASA at multiple times over its history. Previously, it was rejected because CASA's membership was primarily brick and mortar institutions, with the primarily typical university demographic, and their concerns didn't fully reflect our own. There was a time, in fact, when CASA's members urged the organization to oppose all forms of distance education as being harmful to their own membership.

Fast forward to the current decade, and with online education exploding across the nation, our concerns have become their concerns, and AUSU recently became a member. But what is CASA all about? This week, our feature article is Scott Jacobsen's interview with CASA's Executive Director, Michael McDonald. He explains a little bit of what CASA is, what it does, and how it decides.

Also this week, Deanna Roney takes another look at the effects of the fires in BC. She reflects on the variety of reactions people have, from the helpful to the harmful, and notes how these events can have lasting effects even on those not directly involved. We also have reviews, interviews, diet, life and assignment advice, plus some stuff just to help you procrastinate. Enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl".

## Mi CASA es su CASA

Scott Jacobsen



**Michael McDonald**  
**Executive Director of CASA**

*AUSU is a member of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, better known as CASA, a group that lobbies the federal government and the public to bring awareness of issues that post-secondary students are facing, and provide student-driven ideas to address them. Michael McDonald is currently the Executive Director of CASA, and previously worked for them as the Manager of Stakeholder Relations. After a brief foray into the federal government, he rejoined the group in his current position.*

### **How many universities are part of CASA?**

So, CASA has 21 member associations from across the country. Currently, the member associations from universities total 19; we have 2 polytechnic association members as

well. Those university associations differ between undergraduate associations and graduate associations. About 250,000 people.

### **How fast has the growth been?**

Over the last year, the CASA membership hasn't changed, but we have struck a partnership with the Union étudiante du Québec, or the Quebec Student Union. It is a union that represents 75,000 students in Quebec. That provides an opportunity, really for the first time, for both students from English Canada and French Canada to engage on the same perspectives and presenting the same kinds of issues to the federal government.

We are also looking forward to welcoming a new member from Capilano University Student Union later this year – as it looks like they've voted to join CASA.

### **Do student unions have to be members to come to some of the events?**

CASA has an open-door policy. We want to make sure observers can engage with the organization. We represent students at the federal level. Student leaders find that it's important to show to other student leaders who might be interested. At this conference right now, we have 4 or 5 student associations who have observer status. "Observers" are also some who may consider becoming members in the future.

### **What have been some of the highlight events in CASA Foundations 2017, so far?**

I think our members would easily say CASA having the blanket exercise with the Algonquin First Nations elder, Barbara Hill, which provides a session or an experience of First Nations living in Canada for the last 500 years. It is one that grounds our members in the unique challenges and clear, pressing need for action when it comes to First Nations, Inuit, and Metis education.

As well, it is important. It is also a highlight when the new student leaders come in and learn about a student organization that they get to take over. This is something that they are empowered to run. They make decisions about directions of functions, and about the objectives in the year.

It is watching from day one to day four that is key. Each student leader takes their own approach to it. It is valuable for each one of them. I think that no matter what that was. You would have potentially have over 60 answers as to what is the best session. The hope is that each would have at least one.

**I noticed a positive, proactive, and constructive mode of operating with the student union executives while at CASA Foundations 2017. What makes this approach the best means to engage student union leaders?**

I think, from their perspective, student leaders have always demanded that their organizations represent their values. Those are values of optimism. Those are values that are proactive. Values that are engaged.

That expect that there are places we can make improvements and find solutions. That perspective is one of the things. That perspective has provided CASA with dynamism over its 22-year history. It made sure that it continually reflects the changing and diverse interests of students across the country.

**What are some themes of the issues that tend to come up from students?**

Very often, they are issues of accessibility, of quality, and making sure each student experiences high quality of life in that environment. Some key questions are ongoing. Questions around innovation in education, and questions about its affordability. Some of the core concepts CASA was built with, are still many of our questions today.

The parameters between now and 1995 may be significantly different, but they are the challenges, if you look through the history of student advocacy, that have been ones that have been debated and discussed in different formats since the 1920s.

**What are some of the upcoming highlights for 2017?**

I would turn to our members to ask that, as they are the ones that will be setting that up. As a staff member for an organization that is responsible to, advocates on behalf of, and helps assist our members, one of the things that is wonderful is we get to see new things brought forward every year. As a staff member, I will leave that to the incoming board.

**What have been some of the biggest points of feedback from executives who have attended the CASA Foundations 2017 Conference?**

It just wrapped up. So I only have a bit of feedback. Executives generally appreciate a lot of the hands-on experiences they get. Many of the situations that we put them in for advocacy for communications skills are somewhat modelled after real life experiences: how to structure a meeting, how to engage with someone who may not be fully cooperative with you or may not want to support the same kinds of positions.

That feedback and back-and-forth allow students leaders to make more productive use of their time, make sure they are better advocates at every level no matter who they are meeting with, and make sure they can focus on that throughout their time.

**What has been the comparison with prior years for this year, in terms of performance for the executives?**

CASA is always hoping to make a better experience from year-to-year for this conference. CASA Foundations has been running for 4 or 5 years now. I think we are getting better at it every time we hold it. It is one of those things that we are hoping will deliver the experience that student leaders demand and that they need in their environment. We think that, year after year, student leaders have proven themselves to be exceptional. We want to match that every year.

**For Athabasca University students, who are online and a significant number of those 250,000 people, what do you think is one of the major concerns for online educational institution students?**

I think Athabasca University students are right at the forefront of key questions in accessibility. Many of the questions about how to make sure more Canadians—no matter what background, no matter what age—are getting back into postsecondary education if they need to in a way that is easy for them.

It allows these students to upskill and gives them the opportunity to learn something in a facilitative fashion. One thing that is going on, especially at the Canada Student Loans level, is how to facilitate those transitions back into education that don't punish somebody that worked the previous year, or wants to be able to make that jump to another skill level or degree, or to be able to go onto that graduate level.

To be able to make sure all Canadians across the board access post-secondary education is something Athabasca has always been focused on, especially to overcome geographic barriers—or somebody who couldn't attend a bricks-and-mortar institution. This is a moment right now where the pilot projects that have been initiated by the federal government this year. This is the question that is being asked.

**The youth vote tends not to come out. However, CASA did the get out and vote campaign, and there was a much bigger turnout shown in the polls. How can students learn more about CASA and its voting campaign?**

One, it is our responsibility to make sure the information gets out and to be forthcoming about the things we've been doing. We try to provide executives with as much information as possible. Obviously, the traditional methods such as social media, our website. We're really looking forward to making sure those successes are made clear and understood, so students can understand the political power that they do hold and the ability that this could have in Ottawa. That they aren't powerless and are able to drive a lot of the policy.

**What does 2017 look like ahead for CASA and its membership?**

We just elected a fantastic board and appointed a fantastic set of committee members. We're getting into the priority setting process. It is up to our members. The next two months we'll be setting the key directions of the organization. It is going to be hard work, but interesting. I think this year holds a lot of interesting conversation. The Copyright Act is being renewed. There is discussion around access for adult learners, lead by a pilot project initiated by the Canada student Loans program. We will look at that. These are areas of involvement that students have an opportunity to engage in. I think the ground is laid for some successful advocacy.

*Scott Douglas Jacobsen is the AUSU VPFA. He works with various organizations, and runs In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal, and In-Sight Publishing.*

## Women of Interest

**Francoise Barre-Sinoussi** was born July 30, 1947, in Paris, France. In 2008 Barre-Sinoussi, along with Luc Montaigner, were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their discovery of AIDS. In 1983 they discovered a retrovirus in patients with swollen glands; this retrovirus was later discovered to be the HIV virus. This discovery brought awareness to the urgent need for diagnostic testing to stop the spread of this horrible disease. Barre-Sinoussi is renowned for her research into infectious diseases. In 1988 she developed her own laboratory at the Pasteur Institute in Paris. Francoise Barre-Sinoussi has coauthored over 240 scientific articles. She has received many awards in addition to the Nobel Prize, including the International AIDS Society Prize.

Additional information about this remarkable woman may be found at the following websites:

[https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/medicine/laureates/2008/barre-sinoussi-facts.html](https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/2008/barre-sinoussi-facts.html)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Françoise\\_Barré-Sinoussi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Françoise_Barré-Sinoussi)

<https://www.iasociety.org/IASONEVOICE/From-discovery-to-a-cure-A-conversation-with-Francoise-Barre-Sinoussi>

## The Fit Student Miracle Maker

Marie Well



Great people give. Some give advice. Some give encouragement. Others give miracles.

Three people in my life give miracles. First, my mentor takes the disabled and turns them into advocates. She teaches them public relations, coaches them to run charities, and unleashes them into universities. Second, my boyfriend mentors hundreds of people. His mentees go on to get professional designations, to adopt spirituality, and to make physical fitness a priority. Third, my professor mentored thousands of students. She taught spirituality, creativity, and lifelong learning. She tucked a brand-new book on how-to-teach into my hands.

Often, mentors spawn miracles through oomph. From time to time, they rouse hope through mere example.

When I wished to go full-time to university, one of my doctors encouraged me, another resisted. The one who resisted threatened to put me away. In her eyes, I couldn't handle full-

time. This doctor would have forced me to drop a semester and, in lieu, dwell behind hospital doors. My GPA would have died—along with my spirit.

But another doctor spoke of a disabled female who studied fulltime. Because of this role model, I got the go-ahead. I achieved a Master's degree. Also, I proved that highly medicated patients can gain high levels of fitness. Hospital staff shared my story to give hope to new patients.

Then, I stumbled on a jaw-dropper. I discovered that private clinics host high achievers who have harsh disabilities. Many of them earning six figures. But you rarely hear about them. Their stories are kept hushed. Inspired, I believed I could earn six figures, too.

You see, nothing gags your goals. Not your looks, your education, your weakness, your past. For each excuse, someone rose above. Now, "you have to find a way to be that miracle" (as cited in *The Guardian*).

Yesterday, I toyed with this idea. I felt afraid. For half a decade, I shouldered shuddersome stress. Workplace anxiety. *Could I earn six figures?* In the words of Henry Ford, "If you think you can do a thing or think you can't do a thing, you're right."

Shane Snow says mentors leapfrog you into success. His book *Smartcuts: The Breakthrough Power of Lateral Thinking* shows how.

- Don't force a mentor. Find mentors naturally. Take an interest in them.
- Connect with people who have lots of connections. Then lend your support to others—especially once you gain fame or wealth.
- When you give to others, mentor them, help them, share your connections with them.



- Help people who have lots of connections. This way, they may do you a favor in return.
- Figure out what people need—and offer them solutions. In other words, be a mentor.
- Your kindness and your lack of ego flock around you friends. Friends offer connections. Mentors.
- Your communication devices, such as radios [and social media], don't work on their own. They require you to nurture relationships. So, mentor and be mentored.
- People who give generously climb to the top, says Dr. Adam Grant in his book *Give and Take* (as cited in Snow). Mentor with all you've got.

Form mentors to fire-up miracles. When you reach your goal, give miracles back. Not just by example, but by oomph. Are you that miracle?



## Travelling with Textbook

**Barabara Lehtiniemi**



I'm not a fan of working vacations. To me, vacations are a necessary respite from the ever-present pressures of everyday life. School is one of those pressures. Accordingly, whenever I go on vacation, I usually leave the textbooks at home.

This summer was different. Although I had built vacation time into my study plan, I felt tempted to take a text book along—just this once. One of the courses I'm currently enrolled in is World Literature. Although there is, as you can expect, a lot of reading for this course, the type of reading is more conducive to travel than other courses. For my initial readings of the literature, I don't need to take notes, so it is pure reading, with just me and the text.

I always pack reading material for travel anyway, so it made sense to pack the text from my World Literature course. I anticipated the readings would be both pleasant and productive. The textbook was compact, roughly 9" x 6 ½" x 1", but a bit hefty at 2 lbs. It fit snugly in my carry-on bag.

Our summer vacation would take us to several destinations over two weeks. That meant lots of time spent in airports and in flight. Lots of potential reading time. I printed out the reading list for unit 4 of the course. Then, optimistically, I printed out the reading list for unit 5. I felt excited about taking my AU studies with me; with all this reading a two-week vacation would barely put a dent in my study time.

Fast forward two weeks. Both me and my textbook arrived home safely, perhaps a little travel worn. The text is a bit bent at the corners from being squeezed in and out of my jam-packed carry-on bag.

Despite the book's beat-up appearance, I didn't get as much reading done as I expected. I found airports too noisy and distracting to concentrate on ancient writings like those of Homer and Sophocles. I did get some

reading done on flights. In the end, though, I barely got through half the readings for unit 4, and I expect I'll have to re-read them.

Travelling with a textbook was a worthwhile experiment. I know some students take their textbooks along with them everywhere—to coffee shops, cruises, and even the beach. That's one of the benefits of taking AU courses: the ability to study anywhere.

For me, my best studying happens in a quiet, familiar environment, which usually means at my desk at home. I'm glad I took my textbook on vacation and tried to study on the go. I might take a text travelling again. But now I know I can't depend on making too much course progress away from home. For me, the distractions of travel just don't leave much time or inclination for textbooks.

*Did you take a textbook travelling this summer? Share your experience travelling with textbook at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org).*

*Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU student. She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario.*



## The Fires Burn On

Deanna Roney



Over the weekend the fires in BC continued to grow in both size and number. Athabasca University has a plan for students affected by natural disasters, if you are being directly affected please contact the Student Union they can help you.

The number of evacuations grew substantially. The city of Williams Lake, as well as the surrounding area, was put under an evacuation order. Loon Lake was also evacuated due to another fire, and homes in Lake Country were evacuated because of a new fire that started on the weekend. These fires are impacting thousands of people,

Williams Lake's population is about 11,000, not including some of the surrounding area that fled as well. That meant that the escape route out slowed to a crawl.

The original plan for residents of Williams Lake was to travel north to Prince George, but when the fire jumped the river those plans had to change bottle necking two separate evacuation orders. The estimated total number of evacuations in BC, including those around Prince George, is 37,000 people ([CTV News](#)).

Fearing the loss of your home is bad enough when faced with wild fires, but another concern for residents leaving is the possibility of looting. Taking advantage of people facing a crisis is bad enough, but another part of it is that it means some people won't evacuate, staying instead to protect their homes and their livelihoods from the potential looters in the area. It is contemptible how much this is going on in these areas. And how much more pain it is inflicting on those that are really dealing with enough.

It isn't just the misguided that come out during these events though. There are people risking their own safety to go into closed areas and help others, they are loading up horses, pigs, chickens—anything they can—and giving other people space on their property to house themselves as well as their animals, and tending to them. There are cowboys staying behind and working together to move their cattle from place to place as the fires' directions shift. The firefighters are working in hazardous conditions to try to protect homes. People are coming together to volunteer to distribute goods to evacuees, to provide food for those waiting to register, to lend an ear if someone just needs to talk.

A disaster like the one BC is facing brings out both kinds of people. Those that would take advantage of a dire situation, and those that risk it all to help others and to protect what they have worked so hard for. We should be the person who spreads kindness, don't take advantage of someone's situation, consider what would it be like if the roles were reversed. This doesn't just go for situations like the fires, but always.

With the fire that ravaged Fort McMurray last summer some of the most iconic images were the people riding their horses to safety through the thick smoke and glowing skies. The images that have struck me the most have been those of cattle being driven down highways, their faces covered in soot, forging where they can amid the ash.

*Deanna is an AU graduate who loves adventure in life and literature. Follow her path on the writing journey at <https://deannaroney.wordpress.com/>*



## In Conversation .. with Christian McBride

**Wanda Waterman**



Christian McBride is a master jazz bassist famed not only for his superb recordings and performances but also for his collaborations with a broad range of musical luminaries. These include Freddie Hubbard, Sonny Rollins, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Pat Metheny, Isaac Hayes, Chaka Khan, Natalie Cole, James Brown, Sting, Paul McCartney, Carly Simon, Bruce Hornsby, Queen Latifah, and Kathleen Battle.

McBride was brought up in Philadelphia but studied classical music at the Julliard School in New York, where he was soon recruited by a major jazz band. His main project now is the Christian McBride Band, which started in 2000, but he's involved with a number of other projects. The Christian McBride Big Band and Jazz House Kids is one of them: a community arts organization founded by his wife, singer Melissa Walker. He also loves mentoring up-and-coming musicians.

Just before performing at the 2017 Montreal International Jazz Festival McBride kindly agreed to answer our questions about jazz past and present.

**Was your mentor, Wynton Marsalis, more about "all of jazz" than he was about any particular jazz era?**

No, that was his brother, Branford. One of the great controversies of Wynton's rise in the eighties was his seemingly narrow scope of what jazz was. He was very much *not* a fan of fusion. He was very much *not* a fan of avant garde. Us players in our teens, we were listening to those records of Miles Davis from the eighties, and Wynton was against that. He was like, "Put that crap away and listen to Miles from the fifties!"

While I didn't agree with that then any more than I do now, I knew that it would probably not be a bad thing if I were to consider music from—I don't want to say the Golden Age, but if I were to concentrate on a particular area of jazz that could help me develop as a musician while still making my secondary goal to stay on top of current trends and learning different styles of music, that would only make me a better musician. But knowing Wynton meant focussing on a particular period and style of jazz [the late fifties post-bop era].

**Because of the new digital technologies we can, for example, know more about the blues of Mississippi in the thirties than did most Mississippians in the thirties. What effect has this simultaneity had on you as an artist?**

Now that everyone has the ability to listen to any kind of music anywhere, at any time, there's no excuse for aesthetic ignorance. There's absolutely no reason why a person can't have at least a pedestrian knowledge of any form of music, and if not, it just means they choose not to look for it. Sadly, I think that the more convenient things are the less people actually take advantage of that convenience, or they take it for granted.

**Do you spend much time checking out new developments in jazz?**

I try very hard to practice what I preach. I don't spend ample time in searching out what musicians are doing in South America or Africa or Asia, or even have the time to go out in New York, where I live, to hear a lot of other musicians. Life is what it is and there's no time to do that kind of stuff. But I try my very best to stay on top of things and be as curious as possible. There's a huge, huge world out there.

**Your touring schedule sends you all over the world. Do you ever get to hear what's happening musically in the countries you perform in?**

Yes and no. When you're on a tour like that and you're doing a different city every night, practically speaking you don't have much time to do anything. You get to a city in the afternoon, you do a quick soundcheck, you do the concert, and then you can choose to either go out or go to bed and get ready to repeat the same cycle the next day. Travelling to all these places, you sort of only get half of what you could get, just because of time constraints.

Festivals give you more opportunities to go and hear other groups. I always try to go and hear local groups. Festivals in Italy or Bulgaria or Turkey always feature a lot of local music. I know for a fact that there are some musicians in Istanbul that are absolutely breathtaking

**What conditions do you need to go on being creative?**

If you're working or travelling every day you do your best to put yourself in the situation where you can be creative and I think you should be able to be creative anywhere.

I've been playing with Chick Corea for the past 22 years, and I've seen this man write music on a bus, or at an airport gate waiting for a flight. That's the discipline of making yourself stay creative. You hear people say, "I love being in a room where it's quiet and peaceful." That's great if you can have that, but realistically that's not always going to happen. People like Wayne Shorter or Pat Metheny—these people are creative no matter what's going on.

*Wanda also writes the blog The Mindful Bard: [The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self](#).*



## A Grain of Salt from the Japanese

Xin Xu



Ghandi once said, "live as if you were to die tomorrow and learn as if you were to live forever". The Japanese certainly took the second part of the quote to heart. Living forever is a skill, and there's a certain focus and rigor in the way Japanese people learn to master this art. The Japanese enjoy some of the longest life expectancies around the world, and suffer from significantly lower risks of heart disease and chronic obesity. While it may not be possible to mimic the same social, cultural, and individual health habits of the Japanese people, there are still some valuable lessons to be learned. Here are their top four secrets to longevity.

### Hold your horses

In the 21st century, it's inevitable that we enjoy doing things efficiently. The same idea goes for eating. The popular belief is that "If we save time doing x we could spend more time doing y. I am guilty of this, myself. This might seem hypocritical to say when I recently wrote about time-saving ways to cook, but the crux of the matter is, slowing down the consumption of food is as much about appreciating every bite as it is about well-being. Eating slowly forces us to think about our food choices and to gradually reduce our ever-expanding appetite for the sugary, the caloric, and the savory. Chewing thoroughly has also been shown to promote metabolism, as it reduces the digestive work our stomachs perform.

### 80 is the magical number

"Hara Hachi Bun" is an adage Japanese children grow up with. It translates to "eat until you're 80 percent full". Ultimately, eating until we're 80 percent full serves to limit calorie intake. Culturally, being conscious about food intake has allowed the Japanese to reap many benefits. Research shows that mice live longer with daily caloric limits and unsurprisingly, this is seen in the Japanese. Perhaps this is the reason I find myself frowning at Japanese food portions, when instead I should be worshipping these carefully controlled servings.

### Power breakfast

By power breakfast I don't mean the legendary Michael Phelps breakfast featuring three sandwiches and six toasts followed by three more pancakes. Japanese opt for the small but powerful breakfast, which is considered in Asian cultures to be the most important meal of the day. Growing up, I remember being grounded for something as seemingly trivial as missing breakfast. The value of breakfast cannot be understated. The 102-year-old Japanese Centenarian makes breakfast her most significant meal with diverse proteins, fruits and carbohydrates. However, no portion amount exceeds the size of one fist. Lastly, the Japanese obtain fresh ingredients from local farmer's markets to cook up a breakfast for champions (Johnson, 1992).

### Go fish

When asked what everyone's favorite protein is, I rarely hear fish being a favorite. Beef, chicken, lamb, and pork are what North American culture boasts of with its plentiful hamburgers, meatballs and BLT. The Japanese beg to differ. A diet consisting of fresh fish has been associated with lower rates of heart disease and cancer, which is exactly what the Okinawa (or Japanese) diet features (Koto, 1973). The secret is in the Omega-3 fatty acids,

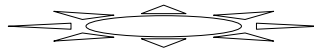
an anti-inflammatory agent that keeps our arteries unclogged and healthy. Think about these as natural detox agents for your body. Do you want a healthy heart? If the answer is yes, then go (eat) fish.

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*Xin Xu is a post-graduate health-science AU student, aspiring clinician, globe-trotter, parrot-breeder and tea-connoisseur.*



## The Creative Spark! Change the World with Metaphors

**Marie Well**



Do you want the secret to creative breakthroughs? Do you want to write original essays? Books? Theses? Deep within, we all do. The hunger to think creatively hides in the heart of humankind. But some people bubble over with innovation after innovation: Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawking. How do they do it?

Dr. Roberta Ness unveils your innermost genius in her book *Innovation Generation: How to Produce Creative and Useful Scientific Ideas*.

Ness says metaphors guide the ways we think about the world. Metaphors also lock us into tiny truths. Yet, twisting a metaphor or an analogy can rupture our view of the world. And give rise to a miracle.

So, whatever truth prevails, threaten it. Tug at it. Ask it for one last Cha-cha.

As Ness implies, new truths come to light from fresh metaphors. Even in the hard sciences. You see, widespread truths are often stories that get repeated—until we believe. And I believe we can find a case, evidence, or fact to back most any story.

Let's take a closer look at my claim. Ask yourself, *Is the knowledge arising from universities foolproof?* Certainly not. Universities can riddle themselves with profs fearful of documenting their thought processes. Fearful of being found as frauds. Their research—their stories—amount not to truths nor to facts. And even facts fade and twist with time. And truth? Truth can have 7.5 billion nuanced interpretations. Even Einstein's theory trembles in the quake of quantum physics.

And that's where the mavericks get bold. Take the case of Malcolm Gladwell, bestselling writer. He tugs at the truth that IQ and hard work predict mastery. Instead, he suggests your birth-month may be a bigger predictor.

So, how might have Malcolm Gladwell developed this insight? He may have made a simple observation: the oldest and biggest have a team advantage. And he pinpointed birth-month as a cause. In other words, it's best to start school as an older five-year old rather than a younger five-year old. The littlest guys do less well in the long-run.

What did he do next? He might have sought research to support his view. How much supportive research did he need? Not much. You see, in my grad program, a single case study held as valid research. That means even outliers—the oddball cases—yield truth. In other words, you can find support for most any view. Typically, the more support, and the fewer naysayers, the stronger your claim.

But mavericks tread new ground. To do so, they twist metaphors, observe details, and defy biases (to name a few characteristics) writes Roberta Ness.

Let's return our focus to solely metaphors—namely, *twists* in metaphors. Take the view of gender identity. Feminists turned foreign language genders into metaphors for sex classification. As a result, the old ways of classifying sex no longer hold. Instead, we have arbitrary genders—multiple ones or none if we so choose. So, gender subverted sex. One metaphor for identity replaced another.

But, I learned how to make metaphors from the master Pat Patterson in his book *Song-Writing Without Borders*. He can take any object and find hundreds—even thousands—of different metaphors. He does so by "asking the two questions: 1. What quality does my object have? 2. What else has that quality?" (p. 89). The more qualities you can find in common, the stronger the metaphor.

For instance, consider the word "peace." What quality does it have? For one, *officers*, as in peace officers. So, what else has that quality? *Business*. Businesses have officers: CEOs, CFOs, COOs. So, business and peace have "officers" in common.

Let's take that metaphor and craft something new: Chief Peace Officers. What then, if Chief Peace Officers formed in businesses? How might the role of Chief Peace Officers mutate over time?

But Pat Patterson can take *any* two objects and tie them into metaphors. So, does that imply that any two objects can combine into metaphors—and change the world? Yes, when it comes to innovation. Perhaps this world's limitations might get pushed to no limit. So, play with metaphors until you fuse discovery.

If metaphors can lead to breakthroughs, and we can find metaphors for most anything, what limits us? Roberta Ness says there is one caveat to metaphor innovation: the new metaphor must be beneficial. If not, why bother?

Who and what defines the word "beneficial"? I believe the beneficial lives in spiritual laws that cross all religions. But, you might prefer other views on ethics. Or you might whip up metaphors that reshape the field of ethics. A paradox? I call it a creative spark!

#### References

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- Ness, Roberta. (2012). *Innovation Generation: How to Produce Creative and Useful Scientific Ideas*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Pattison, Pat. (2011). *Song Writing without Borders: Lyric Writing Exercises for Finding Your Voice*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Writer's Digest Books.

## Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** Social Media Scholarship

**Sponsored by:** Marketing Certified

**Deadline:** August 31, 2017

**Potential payout:** \$500 USD

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be between the ages of 16 and 25 as of August 31, 2017, be a citizen of Canada or the US, and have a GPA of 2.5 or higher.

**What's required:** A "like" on the scholarship Facebook page, an online registration form, a maximum 500-word essay explaining how social media can benefit your future employment prospects, and a completed 50-question social media exam.

**Tips:** The application process is multi-stepped; read the instructions carefully.

**Where to get info:** [www.marketingcertified.com/scholarship](http://www.marketingcertified.com/scholarship)



## Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following What's Hot around AU's Social Media Sites.

### AthaU Facebook Group

Heather needs the rundown on re-booking an exam. Ophelia wants to know where to find the "CMC Classroom" mentioned in the Moodle orientation. Mícheál seeks insight to help choose between BIOL 230 and 235.

Other posts include myAU portal errors, AUSU course evaluations, and courses ADMN 232 and PSYC 375.

### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "#AthaU is now accepting applications for the full-time position of Junior Academic Advisor! Apply now: <http://ow.ly/iKGk30dHfXA>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "AUSU posted updated policy 3.01 Elections Conduct on our website! <https://www.ausu.org/governance/bylaws-policies/> ..."

@AthabascaUBiz tweets: "Volunteers needed! Who better to speak to prospective students than current students and alumni? <https://t.co/jeqba031HT>. "

### Youtube

Interested in AU's MBA for Executives program? Check out the Athabasca University MBA Webinar, posted by AU's Faculty of Business.





## Music Review

### The Sylvia Platters

Drew Kolohon



**Artist:** The Sylvia Platters

**EP:** *Melt*

The Sylvia Platters, a four-piece, shoegaze/power pop band from BC, dropped their five song EP, *Melt* on June 23rd. The Sylvia Platters consist of Nick Ubels on vocals/guitar and Tim Ubels on drums/vocals. With the addition of Alex Kerc-Murchison on guitar and Scott Wagner on bass, this slacker rock band wrote songs and played shows around BC before recording *Melt*. This EP is a definite change from their first album, *Make Glad the Day*. Where their first album had an indie rock vibe, *Melt* is slower paced and focuses more on the feel of the songs than the melody. The addition of two new members mirrors the change that this EP is showing off. *Melt* is a perfect example of growth and change within a band. Rather than staying the course and playing it safe, The Sylvia Platters took their experiences from the last album and created something new and exciting.

*Melt* starts with the song "Eclipse". This song is drastically different than their previous work. Though the melody is dark and dissonant, the vocals have a haunting quality that draws you in. It can be difficult to create a catchy song that has a slower pace, but The Sylvia Platters nailed their new style with this opener. Picking up the tempo, the next song, "Faith Healer", has an uplifting ambience which is helped by the tinkling of the xylophone. The vocals on this track are more prominent than "Eclipse", however they both have similar tones.

Taking the role of the ballad on the EP, "Tangerine" uses moving guitar lines and staccato drum beats to create an emotional experience. Ballads can get lost in their own sentiment but "Tangerine" keeps you engaged by ending the song with an electrifying outro. "Utrecht", the fourth song on the EP, seems to take its styling from The Cure and Death Cab for Cutie while still maintaining the shoegaze feel. *Melt* may be a slower, more methodical EP but that does not mean that it is any less memorable. The final song on the EP, "Sunkissed", shows off the dedication the band has to creating an emotional soundscape rather than a typical rhythm. This is showcased in the outro with off-beat synth work that creates a chaotic yet measured close to this amazing EP.

The Sylvia Platters have put a lot of work into this EP. Produced by A.J. Buckley in a snow swept February, this band has put their all into this project. A style change for a band can prove challenging, however The Sylvia Platters not only did it well, but took their listeners along for the journey. *Melt* can be found on their [Bandcamp](#) as well as on all of the popular streaming services, including Spotify and Apple Music. This is an excellent EP and I strongly recommend checking both it and their past work out.

*Drew Kolohon is an avid music fan who is finishing up his Bachelor's degree in English.*



Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Minimalism: It's in the Details

Dear Barb:

*I've been seeing a lot of information about minimalism. My girlfriend tells me I should look into it, she says I have too much clutter/stuff in my life and I need to live a simpler lifestyle. I don't agree. I feel I worked hard to accumulate my stuff, so why should I get rid of it. I just don't see the advantage. She says I'm closed minded and unwilling to change. I think there are lot of people like me who are totally happy hanging on to their stuff. What's your opinion? Thanks, Brad.*

Hey Brad:

Have you looked into minimalism? It is not simply getting rid of stuff, it is a lifestyle change and worth considering. Decluttering your home and your life has many benefits to your mental and physical health, and your overall sense of freedom. Possessions can weigh us down. Often people feel the need to collect possessions to compete with friends or family. If your brother gets a new truck, you want a better truck. Society attempts to convince us that we need these items to feel good about ourselves. We don't! In reality, they are distractions. Ask yourself how many items you have bought that you really wanted. Dave Ramsey is a New York Times bestselling author of "The Total Money Makeover" says "We buy things we don't like with money we don't have, to impress people we don't like."

Decluttering our homes helps to reduce overall stress. Imagine walking into your home and seeing only what you need. Your countertops only

hold items you need and use daily, rather than items that sit and collect dust, like that old cookie jar you got for a wedding gift and have never used. These things can be donated. Give others a chance to use items you don't. Another way of minimizing your life is by clearing your schedule of appointments after 5pm. When you come home after work, spend time with your family doing things you want to do. Without having to spend buying things to impress others, you will require less money, therefore you will have to work less. Without these distractions, you will have a clearer direction towards the things you want to do. As well, by doing the things you want to do, you will get to know yourself better and discover what you really want in life. Your relationships will be deeper and more meaningful as you quit competing and comparing. Begin your journey into minimalism with small steps. Start with one room in your house by going through drawers and closets and take out everything that you don't absolutely need and put it away for 30 days. If during those 30 days you have not had to use any of these items, donate them. Then move on to the next room. As you progress through your house, you will see and feel the benefits of a minimalistic lifestyle. When you are ready to totally commit to this lifestyle, there are many books available to help with the transition. Also Netflix is now showing "Minimalism: A Documentary About the Important Things." This film is available on iTunes, Amazon, Google Play and on DVD. So before you just bush off your girlfriend's suggestion, dive a little deeper, maybe this is something you could benefit from. Thanks for your timely question Brad.

Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGodin

Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org). Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



# Wouldn't it be great if . . .

... Adele had an epiphany and after that all her songs were about emotional autonomy, triumph, and hope?



Never mind, I'm now my own best friend!

... international TV talent shows could lead to the end of terrorism?

I couldn't bomb her school after the way she sang "For Once in My Life" on Arab Idol!



... the Kardashians got serious about religion?

Our lives are far too meaningful now to be shared on television!



... Jason Bourne gave up, named himself Fred Bivouac, and camped out on a tropical island for the rest of his life, living on change he begged from tourists?



Tellwidem! Tellwidallofem!

WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN

This space is provided free to AUSU. The Voice does not create or edit this content. Contact [services@ausu.org](mailto:services@ausu.org) with any questions.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Jul 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Sept](#)
- **Aug 8:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Aug 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Sept 1](#)
- **Aug 15:** [September degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Aug 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Oct](#)
- **Sep 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Aug 1](#)
- **Sep 12:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)

## It Takes a Village

If you're juggling a course load with raising a child, you know that support from others can make all the difference. **Student LifeLine** is there to help you navigate through all the stages of parenthood, whether you're trying to adjust to a tough schedule as a student and parent, raising a toddler or a teenager, or wishing you could help your child succeed at school. **Student LifeLine** can share tips to help you manage the stresses of a growing family.

Contact **Student LifeLine** any time, 24/7 at **1-800-567-2255 (TTY:1-877-371-9978)** to speak to a caring, professional consultant for free expert advice.

You can also log in to [www.lifeworks.com](http://www.lifeworks.com) (username: **AUSU**, password: **wellness**) to access a wealth of helpful parenting articles and resources, such as:

- Infographics like "How to Hold a Family Meeting"
- Articles like "Helping Your Child Adjust to a New Home and School" or "Adjusting to an Empty Nest"
- Toolkits such as "First 3 Months with a New Baby"
- "Keeping the Peace at Home: Tips for Parents" podcast.

**This is a FREE service for all AUSU members!**

**Student LifeLine provides help and support 24/7 for any issues, from health, wellness, work, life, money, school, community referrals, and more!**



## Apply for an AUSU Committee Seat!

Want to get more involved with your Students' Union?

Do you have ideas for engaging with other AU students?

Looking for a chance to get experience in committee or governance work?

Apply to be a voting member of the AUSU **Member Engagement & Communications Committee!**

Typical duties include developing the AUSU communication plan, discussing and implementing means for member engagement, reviewing and assessing communication and service usage statistics, trends and demographics, as well as brainstorming and proofing AUSU communications.

You can apply no matter where you live - meetings are by teleconference and committee work is done online! Must be an AUSU member to apply & remain a member while on the committee.

**Visit our website [here](#) for more information or to apply to sit on the committee!**

The deadline to apply is **Friday, July 28 at 4pm MT.**

## Join an AUSU Committee!





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# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

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## THE VOICE

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*The Voice* is published every Friday in HTML and PDF format.

Contact *The Voice* at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org).

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